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LIVED EXPERIENCES OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS ON INSTILLING VALUES THROUGH CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative-phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of elementary school teachers in instilling values through classroom discipline. There were 14 public elementary teachers who were selected using purposive sampling technique: seven participated in in-depth interviews and seven participated in focus group discussions. Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the data. The lived experiences of teachers included utilizing discipline as a means of value formation, experiencing gradual development of learners' values, managing the challenges to teacher authority, and navigating socio-familial and school-related influences on discipline. As coping mechanisms, teachers employed regulating emotions through self-control, seeking support through peer sharing and collaboration, coping through prayer and faith, engaging parents' partnership and shared responsibility, and relieving stress through personal time and relationships. Teachers also shared insights they could offer to others, including: mindful emotional regulation as a professional virtue in teacher–student interactions, contextualizing discipline through learner profiling and emotional awareness, teaching values through consistent role modeling, care and collaboration as foundations of meaningful discipline, and guiding behavior through gradual and process-oriented values formation. The results of this study are significant to public elementary teachers, learners, parents, school administrators, DepEd officials, and future researchers, as they provide deeper awareness and understanding of classroom discipline as a vehicle for values formation and support the development of reflective, compassionate, and value-centered disciplinary practices that contribute to nurturing ethical and respectful learning environments.

KEYWORDS: *Instilling Values, Classroom Discipline, Public Elementary Teachers, Qualitative Research, Phenomenological Approach, Thematic Analysis, Compostela District, Davao De Oro*

RESULTS

Lived Experiences of Elementary Teachers in Instilling Values Through Classroom Discipline After analyzing the responses of the teachers in instilling values through classroom discipline, the following themes emerged: (a) discipline as a means of value formation, (b) gradual development of learners' values, (c challenges to teacher authority, and (d) socio-familial and school-related influences on discipline.

Table 1 presents the essential themes and corresponding core ideas that further expound each theme.

Table 1
Essential Themes and Core Ideas on the Lived Experiences of Teachers in Instilling Values Through Classroom Discipline

Essential Themes	Core Ideas
Discipline as a Means of Value Formation	• viewing discipline as a process of teaching rather than punishment • establishing classroom rules at the beginning of the school year • practicing consistency and firmness in implementing discipline • correcting learners immediately to shape behavior • reinforcing values through repetition and reminders
Gradual Development of Learners' Values	• observing gradual improvement in learners' behavior over time • noticing behavioral changes leading to a more orderly classroom • witnessing positive changes in learners' attitudes and character • seeing behavioral improvements through discipline • noticing holistic development in learners
Challenges to Teacher Authority	• experiencing reduced respect • encountering challenges in teaching values to self-directed learners • experiencing learner resistance to discipline • struggling with inconsistency in learners' responses
Socio-Familial and School-Related Influences on Discipline	• experiencing learners' behavior shaped by their socio-cultural background • encountering parental denial of learners' misbehavior • observing inconsistencies in disciplinary practices among teachers

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Discipline as a Means of Value Formation

Teachers highlighted that discipline serves as a foundational element in shaping students' values, extending beyond the simple management of classroom behavior. They emphasized that through value-based corrective measures, strategic rule-setting, and individualized approaches, educators are able to guide learners in a thoughtful and fair manner.

Teachers emphasized that discipline is best understood as a process of teaching rather than a form of punishment, as shared by IDI05:

"...So, we know that discipline is not a punishment its teaching."

(So, we know that discipline is not punishment; it is teaching.)

Another participant highlighted the importance of establishing clear classroom rules at the beginning of the school year to set expectations early on., as shared by IDI04:

"Sa pagsugod palang sa klase sa first day, nag-implement na gyud ko sa akong mga rules ug policies sulod sa classroom. By doing that, murag gina-condition na nimo ang mga utok sa mga bata nga mao nay dapat nila sundon."

(Right from the first day of class, I implemented my rules and policies inside the classroom. By doing this, it conditions the students' minds to understand what they are expected to follow.)

FGD04 also shared that consistency and firmness in implementing rules were also seen as essential, as they reinforce accountability and fairness among students:

"So mao na dapat ug unsa imong i-kuan i-impose nga discipline sa bata, dapat firm gyud ka sa imong pag-impose sa discipline."

(Whatever discipline you want to instill in the child, you really need to be firm in enforcing it.)

Teachers noted that correcting learners immediately helps shape behavior effectively, allowing students to recognize and reflect on their actions in the moment, as mentioned by IDI03:

"Akoa, once modiscpline ko ug bata, mo-form ko ug character sa bata. I-correct gyud nako sa time nga iyahang gibuhat, ingana gyud ko."

(When I discipline a child, I really make sure to correct them immediately at the moment they make a mistake.)

Further, participants also stressed the value of repetition and constant reminders in reinforcing positive values, ensuring that these are internalized over time, as shared by IDI06:

" If mag-instill ka ug values sa ilaha, kinahanglan balik-balikon gyud nimo… gina-practice gina-remind gyud nako na sila every day."

(If you instill values to your learners, you really have to keep repeating them constantly… I make sure they practice it and I remind them every day.)

Gradual Development of Learners' Values

Participants observed that learners' values and behavior develop gradually through consistent guidance, correction, and classroom discipline. They noted observable improvements in learners' conduct, indicating that behavioral change does not happen instantly but occurs over time with proper intervention.

Participants consistently described observing gradual improvement in learners' behavior, noting that changes often occur over time rather than immediately, as shared by IDI01:

"na-observe nako nga later on, when they got mature, inag abot nila sa higher grade, murag mabut-an gyud sila."

(I have observed that as students mature and move to higher grades, they tend to become more well-behaved.)

Central to the participants' experiences was the noticing of behavioral changes that contribute to a more orderly classroom environment, where learners become increasingly responsive to guidance and correction. This was stressed by FGD03 as she shared that:

"naay changes sa bata, so instead kana siya nga nagadagandagan ana imuhang classroom unya naa kay i-instill discipline, pagbalik nimo sa imuhang klase kay hapsay na."

(The child will change, so instead of running around the classroom, once discipline has been instilled, the class will already be in order when you return.)

Additionally, IDI02 described witnessing positive changes in learners' attitudes and character over time, emphasizing that discipline contributes to meaningful personal transformation:

"Learners can change their attitudes and characters that is the positive thing that happen in the classroom."

(Learners can change their attitudes and character, and that is the positive thing that happens in the classroom.)

Another teacher emphasized that learners are capable of change when guided and corrected appropriately, as reflected in their accounts of behavioral improvement through consistent disciplinary practices, FGD01:

"kanang makit-an nako ang bata nga nausab through sa akong pag-correct sa ilang mali."

(Seeing my students change, through my guidance and correction.)

The findings underscore the importance of classroom discipline in fostering holistic learner development, as stated by FGD06:

"Nakita nako nga holistic nga nag-chnage ang bata, nay hollistical changes sa iyaha not only the behavior, tanan ang changes"

(I see that the child changes holistically, not only behavior—everything changes.)

In summary, teachers affirmed that consistent routines, repeated practice, and patient discipline form the foundation for value internalization. They emphasized teacher modeling, rule integrity, and the sustained, consistent enforcement of consequences as essential in reinforcing values and guiding student behavior over time.

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Challenges to Teacher Authority

The teachers' accounts reflect a growing challenge to the exercise of classroom authority, where respect is increasingly diminished and discipline becomes more difficult to sustain. They describe authority as something that is continuously tested by learner resistance, inconsistent compliance, and shifting behavioral expectations.

Teachers narrated that instilling values through classroom discipline has become increasingly challenging, as students' exposure to various external influences appears to contribute to reduced respect and difficulties in classroom management, as reflected in the response of IDI01:

" Lisod kaayo sila i-control tungod siguro sa ilang daghang nakita, mao ng murag nawala na gyud ang kaning usahay ang respect."

(Students are becoming harder to manage. They are exposed to many things that sometimes they lose respect.)

Additionally, teachers expressed that instilling values has become increasingly difficult as many pupils are less receptive to teacher guidance than in the past, requiring value formation to be situational and carefully adapted to students' contexts, as shared by IDI07:

" Lisod na kaayo mag-instill ug values kay kasagaran sa mga bata dili na gyud motoo sa amoa mga maestra kung i-compare nimo sa una. Kay ang mga studyante karon naa na silay kaugalingon nilang mundo, pero ginapaningkamotan mangyud namo nga amoa sila makuanan ug values."

(It is very difficult to instill values nowadays because most pupils do not really believe or listen to us teachers compared to before. Today's students have their own world, but we still strive to guide them in learning values.)

Participants consistently described experiencing learner resistance to discipline, particularly when students showed reluctance to follow established rules or internalize expected behaviors, as shared by IDI02:

" I have many challenges encountered in instilling values through classroom discipline even you are very firm on your rules your learners are very very naughty they will not follow even though you scolded them every time they got mistake."

(I have faced many challenges in instilling values through classroom discipline. Even when I am very firm with my rules, my learners are very naughty and do not follow them. They still disobey even when I reprimand them every time they make mistakes.)

Central to the participants' experiences was also the struggle with inconsistency in learners' responses, where students would sometimes comply with disciplinary measures but resist them at other times, making classroom management more challenging, as stated by FGD04:

" The teacher is consistent to impose values through discipline but ang learners is dili consistency nga to follow sa imong gusto i-kuan nga values."

(The teacher is consistent in imposing values through classroom discipline, but the learners are not consistent in following the expected values or behaviors.)

Teachers collectively noted that maintaining safety and respect in contemporary classrooms has become more complex due to shifting influences on students. They emphasized the need for firm authority, while also acknowledging learner apathy, temporary compliance, and inconsistent disciplinary practices that affect sustained student engagement.

Socio-Familial and School-Related Influences on Discipline

The teachers' narratives revealed that classroom discipline is significantly influenced by socio-familial and school-related influences. Teachers described their daily experiences as an ongoing effort to balance classroom expectations with the realities of learners' home environments and the limitations imposed by school policies.

Teachers emphasized that instilling values begins with understanding learners' varied attitudes, behaviors, and family backgrounds, as these differences often present challenges in managing difficult students while consistently upholding classroom rules and institutional standards. As mention by IDI02:

"In teaching values, first one is very difficult students or learners they have different attitudes, characters, and they have different home which they belong so it's very hard."

(In teaching values, the first challenge is dealing with difficult students. They have different attitudes, characters, and come from different family backgrounds, which makes it very challenging.)

Teachers shared that addressing learner misbehavior often becomes more challenging when parents deny their child's actions. IDI01 stated that:

"dili baya malikayan nga naay parent nga konsentidor. Moingon buotan mana akong anak ma'am. Dili gyud na hilabtanon akong anak, ma'am"

(We cannot avoid that there is indulgent parent who keep insisting, like, my child is well-behaved, ma'am. My child really doesn't cause any trouble, ma'am. ")

Teachers highlighted that differences in how discipline is applied across classrooms can affect learners' understanding of rules and values, leading to varied behavioral outcomes, as stated by IDI07:

"Ang uban subject teacher lahi iyahang way sa paghandle sa mga bata compare sa akoa."

(Other subject teachers deal with the learners in a different way than I do.)

Teachers shared that classroom discipline is shaped by socio-familial and institutional constraints. Learners may come from diverse family backgrounds and are governed by school policies that influence how discipline can be implemented.

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Coping Strategies Employed by Teachers to Address the Challenges in Instilling Values Through Classroom Discipline

After analyzing the responses of the teachers on the coping strategies they employed to address the challenges encountered in instilling values through classroom discipline, the following essential themes emerged: (a) regulating emotions through self-control, (b) seeking support through peer sharing and collaboration, (c) coping through prayer and faith, (d) engaging parents' partnership and shared responsibility, and (e) relieving stress through personal time and relationships.

Table 2 presents the essential themes and their corresponding core ideas that expounds these themes. This covers the coping strategies that teachers employed to address the challenges encountered in instilling values through classroom discipline.

Table 2
Essential Themes and Core Ideas on the Coping Strategies of Teachers to Address the Challenges in Instilling Values Through Classroom Discipline

Essential Themes	Core Ideas
Regulating Emotions through Self-Control	• shifting emotions to regain composure • using breathing to calm intense emotions • strengthening patience through acceptance • controlling self on students' misbehavior • accepting learners' individual differences
Seeking Support through Peer Sharing and Collaboration	• sharing experience with co-teachers • asking strategies from co-teachers • opening concerns to colleagues for suggestion
Coping through Prayer and Faith	• praying for patience • including learners in prayers for support • centering faith to God to handle problems
Engaging Parents' Partnership and Shared Responsibility	• calling parents to address behavior • informing parents on learner behavior • working together with parents for solution
Relieving Stress through Personal Time and Relationships	• engaging in recreational activities to release stress • bonding with family to relax • giving time and care to learners as motivation

Regulating Emotions through Self-Control

Teachers emphasized regulating emotions through self-control as essential in maintaining patience and composure in the classroom. They practiced strategies such as shifting emotions, using breathing techniques, and managing their responses to students' misbehavior. They also learned that accepting learners' individual differences strengthens resilience and sustains hope in the teaching process.

Central to the participants' experiences was that shifting their emotions helps them regulate mood and cope effectively with classroom challenges, as mentioned by IDI02:

"Teacher is like an actress you suko now you got angry and later you will change your mood. That's the attitude of the teacher that is why we can cope with the challenges we experience."

(A teacher is like an actress, you may get angry at one moment, but later you need to change your mood. This attitude helps us cope with the challenges we face.)

Another participant shared that one strategy to regulate intense frustration is through breathing, as stated by FGD06:

"Kana gani, suko na kaayo... mogawas gyud ko sa pultahan ma'am, ug moginhawa gyud ko ana lang ma'am ginhawa."

(When I feel extremely frustrated... I step out of the door, Ma'am, and just breathe—just breathe.)

Similarly, IDI02 reflected on the strategy of deep breathing and brief pauses help manage frustration:

"I overcome also through long breathe and look at my learners that is your own children."

(I also overcome challenges by taking deep breaths and looking at my learners as if they were my own children.)

Participants also highlighted the need to continually strengthen patience, noting that without making the effort to understand learners, teachers themselves may struggle in managing classroom challenges, as shared by FGD01:

"Akoa lang gyud ginapatas-an pa akong pasensya, ginapa- widen nako akong pagsabot... kung dili nimo na sila sabton... ikaw gyud ang magkaproblema at the end of the day."

(I continuously strengthen my patience and broaden my understanding... if I do not try to understand them... I will be the one who struggles in the end.)

Teachers emphasized the importance of self-control particularly in managing their reactions to students' misbehavior, as essential strategies for coping with classroom challenges, as shared by FGD03:

"Akoa mao ra gyud to adjust and control yourself."

(For me, it is just to adjust and control yourself.)

Similarly, one participant shared the same strategy of self-control to manage learners' behavior and cope with classroom challenges, as mentioned by IDI07:

"If naay magpabuyag nga mga bata, akong ginabuhat kay gina-control lang gyud nako akong self. Gina-accept ug gina-embrace na lang nako nga ang mga pupils nako mga bata pa sila."

(If there are learners who act out or misbehave, what I do is control myself. I accept and embrace the fact that my pupils are still children.)

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Finally, FGD05 emphasized that accepting learners' individual differences allows love and compassion to flourish, further strengthening teacher–learner relationships:

"Aside sa accept then appreciate kay we have these individual differences. So, if you accept that one the love will release, so naa gyud ang love."

(Aside from acceptance, also appreciate because we have these individual differences; if you accept that, love will be released.)

The participants' responses stressed the importance of maintaining emotional balance as a key component of effective teaching. They noted that staying composed and patient allows teachers to handle challenging situations and respond thoughtfully to learners. Emphasizing understanding and acceptance of each learner supports a positive and adaptable classroom environment.

Seeking Support through Peer Sharing and Collaboration

One common strategy that surfaced was seeking support through peer sharing and collaboration, where teachers shared concerns and exchanged classroom strategies to better address their learners' needs. They asked colleagues for practical strategies to manage challenges and enhance learning outcomes. By opening up about their experiences, teachers fostered a supportive environment where they could cope with challenges together.

Participants consistently described that sharing experiences with co-teachers and discussing student behaviors helps them manage classroom challenges, as shared by IDI02:

"Also, by sharing to our co-teachers with our experience on the behavior we encountered to our students."

(Another way to manage challenges is by sharing our experiences with co-teachers, discussing the behaviors we encounter in our students.)

IDI05 shared that asking co-teachers about their strategies helps them address concerns and apply effective approaches in managing their own pupils:

"Also, by sharing to my co-teacher's mag ask ta sa ilaha ug unsay mga strategies ang ilahang gibuhat nga magamit pud nako sa akong mga pupils."

(I also share my concerns with my co-teachers and ask them about the strategies they use, so I can apply those strategies to my own pupils.)

The findings underscore the importance of opening up to colleagues, noting that sharing concerns allows teachers to receive new suggestions and recognize strategies they may not have previously considered, as shared by FGD05:

"Importante gyud sa amoa... you have to release sa imuhang kauban... naa man gud na silay ma-suggest... nga nagtoo ka nga mao nato siya tama nato pero ug i-open diay nimo sa imuhang kauban naa pa man diay kay wala pa nabuhat."

(It is important for us... to release to your colleagues... they have suggestions... you might think you've done the right thing, but when you open up, you realize there are things you have not tried yet.)

These statements revealed the importance of collaboration and peer support in enhancing teachers' professional growth and classroom effectiveness. Participants noted that exchanging experiences and seeking advice from colleagues helps them navigate challenges more effectively.

Coping through Prayer and Faith

One important coping strategy teachers used was coping through prayer and faith. They prayed for patience, included learners in their prayers for guidance and support, and centered their faith in God to handle challenges. Through this spiritual practice, teachers found strength and resilience in managing classroom difficulties.

One participant shared that they rely on prayer to cultivate patience and engage in positive reframing, as mentioned by IDI01:

"…unang-una, ihangad na gyud namo na siya sa Ginoo. Help me, God, to have a very long patience."

(…first and foremost, we pray to God, asking for help to have a lot of patience.)

Teacher shared that including learners in prayer helps them seek guidance, strengthen patience, and cope with the demands of adjusting to learners' diverse abilities, as shared by IDI06:

"Ang akong ginahimo kay gina-apil pud nako sila sa akong mga prayer, kay wala may imposible sa Ginoo. Prayer sa ilaha sa mga bata ug ako pud sa taas pa gyud nga pasensya, kay lahi na baya gyud sila karon nga maka-adjust ko sa ilang mga lahi-lahi nga abilidad. Mao nalang gyud na didto na lang gyud ta mag-focus sa pag-ampo."

(What I do is include them in my prayers, because nothing is impossible with God. I pray for the children and also for myself, especially for greater patience, because they are really different now. Since I need to adjust to their various abilities, I focus on prayer as a source of guidance and strength.)

Central to the participants' experiences was that prayer and God-centered faith are essential for coping with challenges in disciplining learners, FGD06 stated:

"Dili gyud nato na makaya ug dili ta mo-apil ug pag-ampo sa Diyos... dapat i-center nato si God para macope-up nato ang atoang mga problema."

(We really cannot do it if we don't include prayer to God... we must center God so we can cope with our problems.

Therefore, participants highlighted the importance of relying on their spiritual beliefs to navigate challenges and maintain composure in the classroom. They noted that drawing strength from faith helped them remain patient and thoughtful when addressing difficult situations. This reliance provided them with guidance, resilience, and a sense of support in managing both personal and professional demands.

Engaging Parents' Partnership and Shared Responsibility

One important coping strategy teachers used was engaging parents' partnership and shared responsibility. They involved parents in addressing behavior, collaborated on guidance, and kept them informed about learners' progress. Through this

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cooperation, teachers and families worked together to find effective solutions that supported students' growth.

In line with this, a participant emphasized the importance of parent collaboration in managing student behavior, as mentioned by IDI03:

"Kuan if naa koy mga bata nga makasala nagapakita ug dili maayo nga behavior, ipatawag gyud ang parents din storyahon dapat naay communication sa parents."

(Whenever I have a student who misbehaves or shows inappropriate behavior, I make sure to call the parents and have a proper discussion. Communication with parents is essential.)

The findings underscore the importance of communicating with learners and parents to address behavior, as FGD07 stated:

"Storyahan ang bata, i-contact ang parent nga mao ni behavior sa bata."

(Talk to the learner, and contact the parent to inform about the behavior of the learner.)

Lastly, teacher highlights that consulting with parents to work together on addressing a child's behavior provides support and helps teachers cope, as mention by FGD04:

"Ipatawag ang parent ug storyahon kanang nagtinabangay mi unsay dapat buhaton para sa iyang anak... makatabang gyud na nga maka-cope ka."

(Call the parent and talk so we can work together on what to do for the child... it really helps you cope.)

Teachers noted the importance of involving parents in supporting students' growth, recognizing that collaboration between home and school strengthens guidance and accountability. They emphasized that keeping parents informed and working together on solutions helps address behavioral challenges more effectively. Such partnerships create a shared responsibility that fosters a supportive environment for learners' overall development.

Relieving Stress through Personal Time and Relationships

Teachers also cope with stress through personal time and relationships by engaging in recreational activities to relax and recharge. They strengthen bonds with family to gain emotional support and restore balance. Additionally, dedicating time and care to their learners provides motivation and a sense of personal fulfillment.

In line with this, teacher emphasized the importance of recreational activities for stress relief, as mentioned by IDI01:

"Kuan, usahay sa weekend magkuan pud we will enjoy ourselves maglaag-laag pud to kaning release our stress. Naa kaning kuan ba recreational activities to release or eliminate stress sa pag-atubang sa mga bata sa tibook semana."

(Sometimes on weekends, we take time to enjoy ourselves and go out to relax and release stress. We also do recreational activities to relieve the stress from dealing with students all week.)

Similarly, IDI05 reflected on the value of family time for relieving stress, stating:

"Also doing recreational activity bonding with my family if there is time in the weekend laag-laag aron ma-release ang stress kana lang."

(I also engage in recreational activities and spend bonding time with my family whenever there is time on the weekends, going out to relax and release stress.)

Lastly, the findings underscore the importance of giving time and love to learners, as stated by FGD07:

"Atoang ihatag atong panahon no i-love nato ang mga bata."

(We must give our time and show our love to our learners.)

These statements highlighted the importance of maintaining personal well-being and meaningful relationships in managing stress. Participants emphasized that engaging in enjoyable activities and spending time with family helps them relax and regain balance. They also recognized that nurturing supportive connections with learners can serve as a source of motivation and emotional fulfillment.

Insights Gained by Elementary Teachers in InstillingValues through Classroom Discipline

After analyzing the insights gained by teachers from their experiences in instilling values through classroom discipline, the following themes emerged: (a) mindful emotional regulation as a professional virtue in teacher–student interactions, (b) contextualizing discipline through learner profiling and emotional awareness, (c) teaching values through consistent role modeling, (d) care and collaboration as foundations of meaningful discipline, and (e) guiding behavior through gradual and process-oriented values formation.

Table 3 presents the essential themes and the corresponding core ideas that further elaborate each theme.

Table 3
Essential Themes and Core Ideas on the Insights Gained by the Teachers from their Experiences in Instilling Values through Classroom Discipline

Essential Themes	Core Ideas
Mindful Emotional Regulation as a Professional Virtue in Teacher–Student Interactions	• practicing emotional governance to prevent harming a child • drawing on spirit guided self-restraint to remain patient • using mindful verbal discipline that corrects without diminishing dignity • valuing patience as a primary professional virtue • applying proactive anger management to respond rather than react • embracing teacher humility and emotional acceptance of one's own limitations

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Contextualizing Discipline through Learner Profiling and Emotional Awareness	• conducting strategic learner profiling to understand individual circumstances • ensuring individualized understanding and fairness in discipline • grounding fairness in genuine learner understanding • avoiding generalization of learner behavior • considering emotional quotient awareness in disciplinary decisions • showing compassion for diverse behaviors
Teaching Values through Consistent Role Modeling	• demonstrating behavioral modeling as the primary vehicle for values • maintaining firm consistency to foster self-discipline • transmitting values through daily actions rather than words alone • aligning words and actions to uphold integrity • sustaining consistent role modeling over time
Care and Collaboration as Foundations of Meaningful Discipline	• demonstrating reciprocity of care when love and respect are shown • applying care centered discipline as a foundation for values • viewing teaching as selfless service and vocation • recognizing the futility of isolated effort without collaboration • demonstrating dedication through care and love
Guiding behavior through Gradual and Process Oriented Values Formation	• implementing step by step discipline to mold behavior • providing sustained guidance beyond single lessons • engaging in strategic disciplinary planning aligned with long term goals

Mindful Emotional Regulation as a Professional Virtue in Teacher–Student Interactions

Teachers highlighted that effective classroom discipline begins with mindful emotional regulation, recognizing learners as individuals with unique needs. They emphasized responding with patience, guided restraint, and respectful communication to correct behavior without diminishing dignity.

In line with this, participants consistently described the importance of controlling one's emotions to avoid harming a child, as noted by IDI06:

"Ug isa pud sa akong na-learn nga dapat kabalo gyud ta mo-control sa atong mga emotions para dili ta makapanakit ug bata."

(One thing I learned is that we must know how to control our emotions so that we do not hurt a child.)

The findings underscore the importance of self-control and faith in guiding learners, as stated by IDI01:

"Naa gyud kay self-control kay ngano kung wala kay self-control makapatay gyud kag bata no. Amo gyud ng batunan ang self-control unya dapat naa gyud taas nga pagtuo sa imong kaugalingon through the guidance of the holy spirit."

(You really need self-control because without it, you can harm a child. We must learn to practice self-control and also have strong faith in ourselves through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.)

Central to the participants' experiences was the importance of remaining calm and responsible in communication when instilling values through discipline, as stated by IDI07:

"Akong marecommend sa other teacher if mag-instill ug values sa pagdiscipline sa mga pupils kay kanang dili gud gani ka dapat masuko, maging responsible ta sa atong mga ipang-storya nga mga words."

(What I would recommend to other teachers when instilling values through disciplining pupils is that you should not get angry. We must be responsible for the words we say because each child understands differently.)

Participants consistently described that patience is a primary professional virtue, essential for effectively instilling values and managing classroom discipline, as shared by FDG01:

"Mo-stick gyud gihapon ko anang patience is a virtue. Mao gyud na ang lesson nga akong natun-an sa pag-instill ug values through classroom discipline nga pinaka-importante gyud ang pasensya."

(I still firmly hold on to the lesson that patience is a virtue. From my experience in instilling values through classroom discipline, the most important lesson I have learned is that patience is truly essential.)

Another participant reflected on the importance of anger management, as mentioned by FDG03:

"Anger management kay naa gyud times mga moabot nagyud ka sa peak nagyud sa imuhang patience. You need to control yourself gyud kay naa gyud time nga kanang manobra na gyud."

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(Anger management is also an important lesson. There are times when I reach the peak of my patience, and I need to control myself because emotions can sometimes get out of hand.)

Moreover, participants also highlighted that patience is essential, noting that teachers must practice acceptance and learn from students, as shared by FDG05:

"Taas gyud ka dapat ug pasensya kay ang mga bata dili mangyud sila pareha tanan. Dapat naa pud kay ma-learn sa mga bata, accept kay dili baya tanan, kung ikaw teacher dili baya ka perfect sa pag-kuan sa mga bata."

(Patience is very important because not all learners are the same. We also have to learn from our learners and practice acceptance, because as teachers, we are not perfect in guiding every child.)

These statements emphasized the importance of mindful emotional regulation as a professional virtue in teacher–student interactions. Participants highlighted the need for self-restraint, patience, and intentional responses to ensure that discipline remains respectful and does not harm learners' dignity. They also recognized the value of humility and self-awareness in managing emotions, allowing teachers to respond thoughtfully and uphold a supportive classroom environment

Contextualizing Discipline through Learner Profiling and Emotional Awareness

Teachers described that meaningful classroom discipline emerges from a deep understanding of learners' individual contexts and emotional states. Their reflections revealed that fairness, compassion, and emotional awareness were essential in understanding each learner's unique circumstances and responding to behavior in a way that supported growth and dignity.

Analysis of the responses indicates that truly knowing and understanding learners is essential when instilling values, as stated by IDI02:

"I realize in my mind that not all learners are *blessed in their home. Some learners are struggling in their sense of living, especially sa pamumuhay nila. That's the reason I realize that in instilling values, you also need to know your learners."*

(I have realized that not all learners are fortunate in their homes; some face struggles in their daily lives and basic living conditions. This is why it is essential, when instilling values, to truly know and understand your learners.)

The findings underscore the importance of understanding each learner individually is a prerequisite to instilling values and discipline, as learners have different attitudes and characters, as shared by IDI03:

"Imoha sa gyud sila ilailahon isa-isa ang character sa imong mga bata. Then usa ka mag-kuan sa ilaha, instill ug values through discipline, kanang discipline pud nga dili makapasakit sa ilaha."

(You really need to get to know them individually and understand their character. Then, when you instill values through discipline, it should be done in a way that does not hurt or harm them.)

One participant recommended that when instilling values and disciplining learners, educators should carefully understand learners' behaviors and ensure fairness to all, as stated by IDI06:

"...when you instill values sa imong mga bata sa pagdiscipline kay atoa sa gyud il-hon ang mga behavior sa atong mga bata ug dapat fair ta sa tanan bata."

(…when instilling values and disciplining pupils, we should really understand their behaviors and be fair to all.)

Teachers highlighted that learner behaviors should not be generalized, as learners differ in experiences and needs, as shared by FGD02:

"Ang batasan gyud sa bata sa isa ka classroom dili mangyud pareho... dili nimo siya i-general kay naa may mga bata gyud nga kanang kulangan ug care sa parent."

(The behavior of children in one classroom is not the same... you should not treat them generally because there are children who lack parental care.)

The analysis revealed that each learner's emotional quotient must be considered, as stated by FGD06:

"Ang lesson nga akong na-learned in instilling values through classroom discipline is kaning emotional quotient, ma'am. Emotional quotient of every learner must matter."

(One of the lessons I've learned in instilling values through classroom discipline is the importance of emotional quotient. The emotional quotient of every learner matters.)

Additionally, participant shared that they learned to show compassion and care for learners, recognizing that student diversity calls for empathy and understanding, as shared by FGD04:

"...naka-learn ko how to love my learners and kabalo ko ma-looy kay ngano man, we have diverse learners' man gud."

(I've learned how to truly love my learners and to have compassion because we have diverse learners.)

These statements highlighted the importance of contextualizing discipline by understanding each learner's unique circumstances. Participants also noted that approaching discipline with compassion and emotional insight supports a more empathetic and effective classroom environment.

Teaching Values through Consistent Role Modeling

The teachers in this research emphasized that effective classroom discipline relies on consistent implementation, teacher modeling, and integrity, as learners internalize values by observing and experiencing fair and reliable practices. Their reflections emphasized that learners internalize values not merely through instruction, but by observing and experiencing fair, consistent, and reliable practices in the classroom.

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In line with this, participants consistently described that teachers must consistently model positive behaviors, IDI04 stated:

"...kita gyud mag-model sa ilaha sa mga good values."

(…we should lead by example and show them good values.)

Another teacher illustrated the role of patience, consistency, and firm rule enforcement in helping pupils internalize values, IDI05 said:

"...we must have a big patience and must be consistent and firm with our rules. By doing that, it can help our pupils to internalize those values that we instill."

(…we must have great patience and be consistent and firm with our rules. By doing so, we help our learners internalize the values we instill.)

Further, one participant stated that learners acquire values primarily through daily actions, as stated by IDI04:

"I realized that values are learned more through daily actions."

(I realized that values are best learned through daily actions.)

The findings underscore the importance of that teachers' actions must reflect the values they teach, as stated by FGD04:

"...kung unsay naa sa imong storya mao pud dapat makita sa imong action."

(Your actions should match your words.)

Lastly, teacher highlighted that instilling values is ineffective if teachers do not model them, as learners tend to imitate the actions they observe, as stated by FGD05:

"...useless yong pag-instill mo ng values kay wala ka nag-act sa maayo, unya masundog sa mga bata."

(It's useless to instill values if you don't act properly, and the learners will just imitate that.)

The participants' responses stressed the importance of teaching values through consistent role modeling in everyday classroom interactions. They emphasized that learners are more likely to internalize positive behaviors when teachers align their words with actions and demonstrate integrity over time. Such consistency fosters self-discipline and reinforces values through lived example rather than mere instruction.

Care and Collaboration as Foundations of Meaningful Discipline

Teachers came to view care and collaboration as foundational to meaningful classroom discipline. Their reflections emphasized that discipline rooted in love, respect, and reciprocity fostered positive learner responses and value formation. They also recognized teaching as a selfless vocation, where genuine care and collaborative effort were essential in guiding learners effectively.

One participant reflected on the importance of showing care and love to learners in fostering respect and value development, as explained by IDI07:

"Embrace and accept your pupil, show them love and care kay ug pakitaan nimo sila ana, pakitaan pud ka nila in return ug love and respect. Madevelop gyud ug dali ang mga values."

(When you embrace and show genuine care for your learners, they are more likely to respond with love and respect, which helps values develop more instantly.)

Similarly, a teacher emphasized that showing care for learners fosters reciprocal respect and supports the development of values, as narrated by IDI04:

"Learn to love show care sa imong mga bata kay balusan sad ka ana nila ug pag-love ug pag-care."

(Learn to love and show care to your learners because they will respond with love and care in return.)

IDI01 emphasized that teaching is a vocation, requiring dedication and perseverance to fulfill its responsibilities:

"This is my profession, so mo-ingon ta ang profession sa maestra is a vocation, so kakayanin hanggat makakaya."

(This is my profession, and teaching is a vocation, so you do what you can as long as you are able.)

Another participant underscored the need for school–home collaboration in values formation, noting that without parental reinforcement, efforts may become ineffective, as expressed by IDI05:

"Ma-useless gyud ang tanan, if inag abot sa balay dili pud tud-luan ug maayong pamatasan sa parents ilang anak."

(All efforts become ineffective if, upon arriving home, the child is not also taught good manners and values by the parents.)

Lastly, one teacher emphasized the importance of showing genuine love for learners, as mentioned by FGD07:

"Need gyud ta ug taas nga pasensya, unya i-love gyud nato atong mga bata."(We really need long patience and to truly love our learners.)

Teachers highlighted the importance of care and collaboration as foundational elements of meaningful discipline. They emphasized that effective teaching requires collaboration and dedication, as efforts rooted in selfless service and mutual support are far more impactful than isolated actions.

Guiding Behavior through Gradual and Process Oriented Values Formation

Lastly, the teachers pointed out that instilling values in learners is a gradual and process-oriented practice, requiring step-by-step discipline, sustained guidance, and strategic planning to ensure lasting behavioral and moral development.

Analysis of the responses indicates the importance of step-by-step discipline in values formation, as mentioned by IDI03:

"Kung gusto nimo sila i-mold nga matarong ang ilang behavior, taasan ang pasensya unya hinay hinay-hinayon gyud sila."

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(If you want to mold their behavior properly, you must be patient and guide them gradually, step by step.)

Teacher emphasized that values are not learned from a single lesson alone, as mentioned by IDI06:

"Need gyud nga kita teachers ang mo-guide aron sa hinay- hinay naa gyud ma-absorb ang bata. Kay dili man gyud na isa ka tudlo lang ma-absorb dayun nila unya follow-up pud ang parents sa balay, naay collaboration ba."

(It's important that we, as teachers, guide the learners so they can gradually absorb what we teach. They won't learn everything from just one lesson, and it also helps when parents follow up at home, there needs to be collaboration.)

Lastly, teacher highlighted the importance of planning disciplinary actions strategically to achieve the objective of guiding behavior change in learners, as mentioned by FGD03:

"Syempre, make a plan para makuha gyud nimo ang imong objective nga mag-change ang bata in a particular disciplining action."

(Of course, you need to make a plan to achieve your objective of helping the child change through a specific disciplinary action.)

The experiences of elementary teachers reveal that public school classrooms foster value formation through inclusive, caring, and strategic discipline. Recognizing learner diversity as natural and valuable, teachers use participatory strategies and culturally relevant approaches to provide equitable learning opportunities. Beyond academics, these practices reflect teachers' ethical commitment to modeling values, guiding behavior, and promoting holistic character development.

Implications for Teaching Practice

The result of this research suggests that instilling values through classroom discipline is a deliberate and transformative process that requires teachers to combine sensitivity, reflection, and intentional action. Effective value formation involves more than enforcing rules; it requires teachers to understand students' individual abilities, experiences, and challenges and to guide behavior with patience, empathy, and consistency.

On the teachers' perspective, the teacher training programs should emphasize strategies for value-based discipline, including pre-assessment of student behavior, strategic rule-setting, and adaptive corrective practices that prioritize fairness, empathy, and contextual relevance. Teachers must be equipped to use discipline not only to maintain order but also to foster internalization of ethical values, accountability, and holistic character development.

Administrators and policymakers should provide ongoing mentoring, training, and reflective opportunities by integrating them into the annual improvement plan. Embedding these initiatives in formal planning structures will ensure sustained and systematic support for teachers in refining their disciplinary practices. This will further suggest that effective classroom discipline is not solely dependent on individual teacher effort, but on organizational commitment to professional development.

In terms of future research, the study will imply the need to incorporate the perspectives of students and parents to gain a more holistic understanding of classroom discipline. Exploring students' experiences will provide insights into how disciplinary practices are perceived, received, and internalized, while parents' perspectives will offer valuable context regarding expectations, cultural influences, and home–school alignment. Including these stakeholders in future investigations will contribute to the development of more inclusive, responsive, and contextually relevant disciplinary approaches.

Recommendations for Future Research

The present study explored the teachers' experiences, coping strategies, and insights in instilling values through classroom discipline. From the outset, the overall contribution of this study was limited by a small sample size and a particular institutional context within which participants were situated, despite generating rich qualitative data that captured the depth of comprehension and reflection by participants. It follows, therefore, that generalization to include all educators or learning institutions should not be made based on these findings.

One important direction for future research is the inclusion of multiple stakeholders' perspectives. While this study focused on teachers lived experiences in instilling values through classroom discipline, future studies may also consider the views of students, parents, school administrators, and policy implementers. Exploring students' perspectives, for instance, could reveal how classroom discipline practices influence their value formation and sense of fairness. Administrators may provide broader insights into institutional policies, supports, and constraints that shape disciplinary approaches, while parents can offer valuable feedback on how classroom-based values and discipline practices extend into the home. Incorporating these diverse perspectives would lead to a more holistic understanding of value formation through classroom discipline.

Additionally, future reforms may be informed by exploring how school culture, peer mentoring, and administrative support shape teachers' capacity to instill values through consistent and compassionate discipline. Research indicates that teachers are more effective in managing learner behavior and modeling values when institutional policies, collegial support, and leadership practices are aligned (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2020; Singha, 2024). Examining the interaction among these variables could provide deeper insight into how collective responsibility and shared moral vision within schools strengthen discipline practices grounded in fairness and empathy.

Ultimately, the effective instilling of values through classroom discipline relies on emotionally stable, reflective, and well-supported elementary teachers. In this study, teachers' experiences highlight how emotional well-being and professional support shape their ability to practice fair, consistent, and compassionate discipline. Thus, future research may focus on examining the relationship between teachers' well-being and the effectiveness of value-oriented disciplinary

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practices in elementary classrooms. Such directions provide a foundation for advancing understanding of values formation not only as a moral ideal, but also as a practical and sustainable framework for fostering equitable, respectful, and nurturing learning environments in twenty-first-century education.

Concluding Remarks

This study was conducted to explore and comprehend how teachers experience and implement classroom discipline to instill values in elementary classrooms. The study's findings emphasize a central principle in classroom discipline: it is not merely about managing behavior, but about recognizing and nurturing the values of every learner. Effective discipline, as described by the participants, transforms the classroom into a space of guidance, moral growth, and respect, where each student's unique traits are acknowledged and leveraged as opportunities for collective learning. This approach reflects a commitment to instilling values such as fairness, responsibility, empathy, and integrity, and demonstrates that differences among learners can serve as strengths that enrich the classroom community.

As a teacher and researcher, I have learned that the highest form of teaching with purpose is fostering values through classroom discipline. This process has been a journey of reflection and professional development, showing that patience, empathy, and thoughtful practice are central to effective value-based discipline. This research deepened my understanding of teachers' resilience, strategic problem-solving, and steadfast commitment to nurturing students' moral and ethical development. It also strengthened my belief that fostering a classroom where values are truly lived requires shared responsibility among teachers, learners, families, and the broader school community.

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